

HR COMMUNICATION BULLETIN #3

TO: ALL STAFF, STUDENTS, VOLUNTEERS
FROM: HUMAN RESOURCES
DATE: MARCH 12, 2020
RE: Guidance for HCH on COVID-19 - IMPORTANT

Effective March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic, pointing to the over 118,000 cases of the coronavirus illness in over 110 countries and territories around the world and the sustained risk of further global spread. As you know, our **tenants and residents living at HCH are at higher risk of serious illness**. Out of an abundance of precaution, HCH is taking extra Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) measures that are considered *over and above* the current guidelines for the general public in Ontario at this time in an effort to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

This **Bulletin #3** is designed specifically for staff, students and volunteers working in Holland Christian Homes (HCH). Its intent is to keep everyone informed of the COVID-19 and to understand how we must work together to protect everyone living, working or visiting any of our Towers or Manors (Faith & Grace Manor) by preventing any potential spread of the COVID-19 and other illnesses. Additional bulletins will be published and made available whenever there are new developments in the spread of the COVID-19.

HCH is committed to doing everything we can to protect the health and safety of our tenants/residents, employees, volunteers, suppliers, service providers and their families and want to assure you that we are taking every reasonable precaution to prevent the occurrence or spread of COVID-19. **We must continue to remain calm and remember that prevention remains our best strategy.**

Travelling Outside of Canada – Discouraged

Any and all travel outside of Canada is strongly discouraged by anyone associated with HCH including residents, families, employees, students and volunteers.

Travelling Outside of Canada – Reporting

All employees, students and volunteers are obligated to report all travel outside of Canada to their direct supervisor prior to departure. This will ensure that HCH will have the necessary information to respond if the COVID-19 case definition is updated in response to changing circumstances.

Working in other healthcare facilities - Reporting

All employees, students and volunteers are obligated to immediately report to their supervisor, if they work in any other healthcare facility, including long term care, retirement community or hospital. In the event of an outbreak in either HCH or this other workplace, staff must work with their supervisor to determine which facility they will work in as they will not be permitted to work in both workplaces.

ENTRY RESTRICTIONS AND SCREENING IS IN EFFECT AND TO CONTINUE UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE:

Voluntary or Passive Screening (Towers VISITORS ONLY)

Voluntary or Passive Self-Screening requires people entering the building to evaluate their own travel contacts and symptoms and voluntarily leave if they do not pass the criteria. For visitors to our Towers, **Voluntary Passive Self-Screening is required** - notices will continue to be posted at entrances with hand sanitizer for visitors and staff. Visitors are being asked to read these each time before they enter, and to not enter if they fail the screening or are feeling unwell.

ALL STAFF REGARDLESS OF WHERE THEY WORK WITHIN HCH - EVEN IF THEY DO NOT EVER ENTER THE MANORS MUST UNDERGO ACTIVE SCREENING PRIOR TO STARTING THEIR SHIFT AS DESCRIBED BELOW:

Active Screening (Manors)

Active Screening means an employee will ask everyone (including staff) attempting to enter the Manor a set of screening questions - asking about potential symptoms of COVID-19, specifically, if they have a new onset cough, if they are experiencing shortness of breath or if they have a fever. They will also be asked about their recent travel history to any area outside of Canada or contact with people diagnosed with COVID-19. Temperatures will be taken to identify possible fever.

Active Screening is currently taking place at a single entrance point for Grace Manor and two points for Faith Manor. **All employees, volunteers, students and visitors** (anyone wanting to enter the Manors) will be screened at the entrance by Faith and/or Grace Manor employees.

Any staff who fails any part of the screening process will be asked to go home and to contact the local telehealth provider (1-866-797-0000) or their own health care provider. Staff could be directed to self-isolate, self-monitor or other action.

ALL STAFF, VOLUNTEERS AND STUDENTS MUST UNDERGO THIS SCREENING EACH AND EVERY SHIFT / DAY YOU COME TO WORK OR VOLUNTEER PRIOR TO ENTERING THE MANOR. We realize the inconvenience this may cause for you, but **we must do everything we can to prevent the spread of COVID-19.** Any staff who refuses or fails to complete this daily screening could be subject to disciplinary action.

Travelling Outside of Canada – 14 days of self-monitoring at home required following the date of return/entry to Canada

All STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS AND STUDENTS working in the Manors or Towers and **who have travelled outside of Canada** (from ANYWHERE in the world, including as a passenger on ANY CRUISE SHIP) will fail the screening and as a result, will be **RESTRICTED FROM ENTERING OUR MANORS / TOWERS FOR 14 DAYS** following their date of return/entry to Canada (Families and visitors to the Manors have the same restriction).

These 14 days will be for **SELF-MONITORING** of any potential symptoms. **If at any time, any respiratory symptoms develop during the self-monitoring, staff and volunteers must inform their supervisor immediately. Staff and volunteers must go to their health care provider and/or consult with the local public health unit. Staff and volunteers must remain off work until symptoms are fully resolved and/or negative laboratory tests have been confirmed.**

Travelling Outside of Canada – Additional Screening must be done after the 14 days of self-monitoring - Approval Required to Return to Work

All employees, students or volunteers who have travelled outside of Canada and completed the 14 days of self-monitoring **must make telephone contact with their direct supervisor on or before the 14th day of self-monitoring prior to returning to work or volunteering in order to undergo a pre-screening.** Supervisors will conduct the phone screening with staff and volunteers and advise the staff/volunteer of next steps (i.e. return to work, or stay at home to self-monitor, or stay at home on self-isolation etc).

All returning travellers should visit the HCH website at www.hch.ca for regular updates and guidance on the recommended monitoring, self-isolation, and testing guidelines related to COVID-19.

Signs and Symptoms

All staff, students and volunteers should be aware of early signs and symptoms of acute respiratory infection:

Fever > 38°C or subjective fever
Cough
Shortness of breath/breathing difficulties
Other symptoms such as muscle aches, fatigue, headache, sore throat, runny nose, diarrhea. Note symptoms in young children may be non-specific – e.g. lethargy, poor feeding.

Reporting Illness

All staff, students and volunteers with symptoms of an acute respiratory infection **must not come to work and must report their symptoms to their supervisors.**

Staff, students and volunteers need to continuously monitor themselves for illness and to stay at home when they are sick.

If at any time, any respiratory symptoms develop, staff and volunteers must inform their supervisor immediately. Staff and volunteers must visit their health care provider and/or consult with the local public health unit. Staff and volunteers must remain off work until symptoms are fully resolved and/or negative laboratory tests have been confirmed.

Department Managers must report all failed screenings, all confirmed respiratory illness and any suspected case of COVID-19 to all 3 Infection Control Nurses from Grace Manor

and Faith Manor and the Towers. It is this leadership team who will work together with Human Resources to determine when the employee, student, volunteer can safely return to work or to volunteer.

Further to any travel-related precautions, **all VOLUNTEERS, FAMILIES, VISITORS and EMPLOYEES are RESTRICTED FROM ENTERING HCH if they are feeling unwell and are showing ANY signs of illness including cold-like symptoms, fever, cough, and difficulty breathing.**

OTHER IMPORTANT NOTICES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

Resident outings and external appointments in the community

- HCH is strongly encouraging all tenants/residents and families to consider whether any tenant/resident outings in the community are necessary, and to limit any non-essential outings to reduce tenants/residents' potential for exposure to illness.
- We are also encouraging tenants/residents and families to consult with their physician and our care teams to determine any medically-necessary appointments, and to discuss the appropriate precautions tenants/residents and families should be taking when residents are exiting and re-entering our Manors or Towers for necessary appointments and outings.
- HCH is cancelling any recreation outings for the time being until further notice.

What other actions is HCH doing to prevent and prepare for a potential COVID-19 outbreak?

- We are continuing to review our internal Pandemic Response Plan, completing regular stock-takes of our supplies, and making every effort to ensure our supplies are well-stocked in preparation for the potential threat of an outbreak.
- We have increased our staffing levels in the housekeeping department to support increased cleaning for enhanced Infection Prevention Control (IPC) practices.
- Significantly enhanced education on hand-hygiene and other IPC practices is being increased throughout HCH.
- HCH will continue to accept new resident/tenant move-ins and will facilitate tours for the placement of new residents/tenants (taking appropriate screening measures). However, we will be reducing the frequency of unscheduled drop-in tours or open house events to limit movement of unessential visitors throughout our Towers and the Manors.
- We all need to be closely monitoring all tenants/residents, visitors and each other for any symptoms of illness.
- HCH is paying close attention to information from the Ministry of Health, Ontario Health, and other government and health authorities.

- In the event of an outbreak or threat of an outbreak of an unusual infectious disease, direction on best practices for outbreak management will be provided by the Ministry of Health and may extend beyond HCH's internal IPC Policy.

The Managers of Activities and Volunteer Services at HCH will be reviewing and monitoring all recreation activities involving visitors to our sites:

- All individuals or small groups of volunteers and/or service providers for activities or entertainment programming will be screened in line with HCH's enhanced visitor restrictions and precautionary travel directives.
- All large group visits (i.e. clubs or other organizations) will be cancelled within our Manors and the Towers including church services. Where possible, the use of channel 990 will be used to broadcast events such as church services.
- All intergenerational group programming with daycares, school and youth groups will be cancelled.

Preventing the spread of COVID-19

Our key preventative strategies for COVID-19 remain the same as our infection prevention and control practices for other respiratory illness outbreaks.

HCH has strongly encouraged all visitors who meet the requirements for visitation to our Towers / Manors to exercise the following precautions:

- Do not enter if they are feeling unwell and showing symptoms of illness.
- Limit their visits only when considered necessary.
- Limit their visits only to tenants/residents in their rooms, avoid interactions with other tenants/residents, avoid visiting in common areas, and avoid touching people, equipment, and things as much as reasonably possible.
- Practice good hand-hygiene, such as frequent handwashing and use of hand sanitizers, especially before and after contact with other people and things.
- Cover coughs and sneezes into their elbow (not your hands).
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), if required.

The above precautions would also apply to staff, students and volunteers.

What communication related to the Coronavirus can families / residents / tenants / visitors / staff expect from HCH?

- There are 2 information bulletins specific to COVID-19 - one for Residents/Tenants and Families and one for Staff/Volunteers and Students – these can be found on our website. Additional bulletins will be published and made available whenever there are new developments in the spread of the COVID-19.
- We will ensure regular, up-to-date information (including the bulletins) is provided to everyone through our website: **www.hch.ca**
- Important current notices will be posted prominently at all HCH entrances
- As per our usual practice, our teams will continue to contact the designated primary point of contact for changes related to the health status of our tenants/residents.



- HCH will provide transparent and timely information related to the status of any suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 related to our residents, employees, or visitors associated with our Towers or Manors.

How can you keep up to date or get more information about COVID-19?

For the latest COVID-19 information relevant to Ontario, please visit the following website: www.ontario.ca.

Who can you contact if you have any questions or concerns about COVID-19?

Manors: Contact the Director of Care, Assistant Director of Care or Administrator.

Towers: Contact the Director of Tenant Care or designate.

Human Resources: Director of Human Resources

Thank you for your dedication and commitment to our residents and tenants during this challenging time

Thank you for your dedication, understanding and cooperation to help us all keep as healthy and safe as possible during this time of potential threat for the novel coronavirus. HCH is closely monitoring the situation, and we are taking all necessary precautions for the protection of everyone at HCH.

We understand that these directives and precautions have implications for us all. We will continue to make our best efforts to support enhancing the quality of life for our tenants/residents and families, providing a safe work environment for our staff, students and volunteers while also supporting these necessary and heightened measures for infection prevention and control at this time.